

Task Analysis

Logically Organizing & Sequencing Lesson Sub-Objectives

Task analysis is the process of segmenting the learning objective into logically sequenced steps. Teachers use their knowledge of the content and of their students learning needs in order to determine how to effectively task analyze a lesson. Since each lesson and each class has its own unique attributes, no one lesson is necessarily task analyzed the same. However, the following guiding principles may be employed to guide a teacher through the process of logically organizing and sequencing sub-objectives.

step
1

Start with a lesson objective and sub-objectives aligned to content standards.

For support with objective writing and/or writing sub-objectives, consult the Objective Writing Quick Guide

step
2

Assign each sub-objective to one of five categories: Connecting, Vocabulary, Background, Content, or Critical Thinking.

For support with categorizing objectives, ask yourself these questions:

1. Does this objective *mostly* build on what students already know? If yes, it is **Background**.
2. Does this objective *mostly* connect the current learning to previous learning? If yes, it is **Connect**.
3. Does this objective *mostly* teach terminology or vocabulary, either explicitly or implicitly? If yes, it is **Vocabulary**.
4. Does this objective *mostly* present and discuss content and/or skills. If yes, it is **Content**.
5. Does this objective *mostly* teach critical thinking? If yes, it is **Critical Thinking**. (For a complete description of Critical Thinking, consult the REIL Learning Observation Instrument, Learner Engagement Rubric.)

step
3

Organize the sub-objectives according to the complexity of their category. You will teach the most simple sub-objective first, and move through the sub-objectives gaining complexity as you go.

As a *general rule*, you can organize the sub-objectives, from simple to complex, according to their category.

Background first.

Connect second.

Vocabulary third.

Content fourth.

Critical Thinking fifth.

There are occasions where you may choose to teach a sub-objective that is aligned to a certain category in an order that is not recommended in step 3. For example, you may choose to teach vocabulary at the end of the lesson in order to give students concrete experiences before learning the terminology. In addition, sub-objectives may be aligned to more than one category. For example, you may require students to use critical thinking (complex reasoning) for more than one sub-objective. In cases such as this, teachers will make a judgement call, based their knowledge of the content and of their students learning needs, about where to place the sub-objective in sequence of the lesson.

What Does This Look Like In An Observation?

During The Pre-Conference

The teacher will arrive at the pre-conference prepared to discuss the objective and sub-objectives they wrote and will be teaching during the observation.

The teacher should be prepared to answer the question, *How have you task analyzed and sequenced the lesson objective?*

The teacher should have rationale for how they logically organized and sequenced their sub-objectives. The following sample lesson plan illustrates the rationale for how the sub-objectives are **logically organized/sequenced in relation to the lesson**.

Standard or Performance Objective: Social Studies, American History, Concept 5: Westward Expansion.

Lesson Objective: The students will select an obstacle or challenge from Lewis and Clark's journey and explain how they overcame it.

Evidence of Learning: A journal entry from perspective of Lewis or Clark.

- Indicate the part of the journey on a map.
- Write an informative-narrative journal entry describing a segment of their journey, the obstacle, and the solution.
- Journal entry must be one paragraph in length.
- Sentences must demonstrate precise descriptive words that show not tell.

Sub Objectives	Teacher Actions	Student Actions	Check for Understanding	Modifications
The students will list problems/obstacles that they have had in class or on the playground.	Background			
The students will state previous knowledge about Lewis and Clark's journey.	Connect			
The students will use the words obstacle and challenge in their journal entry.	Vocabulary			
The students will state obstacles of Lewis and Clark as they progressed through the Rockies on their journey.	Content			
The students will write two descriptive sentences about a problem they had on the playground that is showing not telling.	Critical Thinking			

Vocabulary and Content can be interchanged based on how the teacher chooses to approach the lesson.

During The Observation Lesson

The teacher will teach the lesson in the order planned.

